

# Best Management Practices

MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION



## Illinois chorus frog

*Pseudacris streckeri illinoensis*

Common name • Illinois chorus frog

Scientific name • *Pseudacris streckeri illinoensis*

State status • None at this time

### Ecology

Illinois chorus frogs are found in west-central and southwestern Illinois, southeastern Missouri and northeastern Arkansas. In Missouri, they historically preferred flat, sand areas, but they now inhabit soybean and cotton fields. Illinois chorus frogs are the largest chorus frog, with large, muscular forelimbs. Their color may vary from light tan to tan-gray, with a distinct V-shaped marking between the eyes, a dark stripe from the snout to the shoulder and a dark spot below the eye. These frogs breed in late winter, usually late February through early April, in flooded fields, ditches or other temporary, fishless bodies of water. Tadpoles develop into frogs after about 60 days. Adults range in length from 1-1 inches. Illinois chorus frogs eat various small insects and possibly burrowing larvae.

### Reasons for Decline

Illinois chorus frogs historically inhabited the former sand prairies of southeastern Missouri. However, as this unique habitat has been totally eliminated, so has much of the chorus frog population. In addition, continued draining and clearing of bottomlands in southeastern Missouri have greatly reduced breeding habitat of this species. It also is possible that increased exposure to herbicides and pesticides will cause further declines in populations of the Illinois chorus frog and other amphibians and reptiles.

### Specific Recommendations

As do many amphibians, Illinois chorus frogs require different habitat conditions at different stages in their life cycle. From the time eggs are laid until the tadpoles develop into frogs, these amphibians require ephemeral pools. As adults, chorus frogs require loose, sandy soil. For these reasons, it is important to protect all bottomland and sand prairie habitat and ephemeral pools within the range of the Illinois chorus frog.

→ Draining or destroying known wetland habitat should be avoided.

→ Erosion and sediment controls should be strictly implemented, monitored and maintained for the duration of the project.

→ Avoid removing or destroying unique habitat features, such as downed trees, that provide habitat for reptiles and amphibians.

→ Avoid altering water levels and regimes in wetlands or seasonally flooded areas within the range of the Illinois chorus frog.

→ Disposal of wastes and garbage should be done in designated areas far from wetlands.

→ Avoid physically or chemically removing or altering the vegetation in the 100-foot buffer around wetlands or seasonally flooded areas.

### General Recommendations

Refer to Management Recommendations for Construction Projects Affecting Missouri Streams and Rivers and Management Recommendations for Construction Projects Affecting Missouri Wetlands.

### Information Contacts

For further information regarding regulations for development near wetlands and streams and rivers, contact:

Missouri Department of Conservation  
Policy Coordination Section  
P.O. Box 180  
2901 W. Truman Blvd  
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0180  
Telephone: 573/751-4115

Missouri Department of Natural Resources  
Division of Environmental Quality  
P.O. Box 176  
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0176  
Telephone: 573/526-3315

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
Regulatory Branch  
700 Federal Building  
Kansas City, MO 64106-2896  
Telephone: 816/983-3990

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Water, Wetlands, and Pesticides Division  
901 North 5th Street  
Kansas City, KS 66101  
Telephone: 913/551-7307

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Ecological Services Field Office  
608 E. Cherry Street, Room 200  
Columbia, MO 65201  
Telephone: 573/876-1911

## Disclaimer

These Best Management Practices were prepared by the Missouri Department of Conservation with assistance from other state agencies, contractors and others to provide guidance to those people who wish to voluntarily act to protect wildlife and habitat. Compliance with Best Management Practices is not required by the Missouri wildlife and forestry law nor by any regulation of the Missouri Conservation Commission. Other federal, state or local laws may affect construction practices.